

ASA GRAY HOUSE

88 Garden Street, Cambridge

Built in 1810 by the Massachusetts Society for Promoting Agriculture, this Federal style frame house is the earliest known work of architect Ithiel Town. Its primary significance derives from the fact that it was the long-term residence of Asa Gray: from 1842, when he became professor of natural history at Harvard, until his death in 1888. Gray was one of America's greatest botanists, and his writings launched the study of plant geography. In defending Charles Darwin's *Origin of Species*, Gray pleaded eloquently for scientific freedom. The house was moved from its original site in Harvard's Botanic Garden to its present site in 1910.